



THE WELLESLEY FREE
LIBRARY
FOUNDATION

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on the past year, I am filled with gratitude for our Library’s enthusiastic patrons, generous donors and dedicated staff. Together, we have made significant strides in enhancing our library services in the areas of highest priority for our community. This year, The Library Foundation invested in outreach programs designed to engage all segments of our community. Our Children’s Librarian strengthened impressive connections with local students, visiting every Kindergarten and Fifth-grade class in Wellesley’s elementary schools. These visits not only familiarized children with library resources, but also prepared them for the academic challenges ahead in middle school and beyond.

Our English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) made great advances in further facilitating connections for adult learners from diverse backgrounds. Under the guidance of a dedicated Coordinator, we welcomed participants from 15 countries, including refugees from Ukraine, highlighting our commitment to serve the global community. The program’s structure allows students to progress through tailored classes, culminating in volunteer opportunities that encourage them to give back in turn to newcomers to the program.

The Library Foundation’s funding for technology enhancements and educational programming has been crucial. Thanks to your generous support, technology programming flourished with more than 130 in-person and digital events, ranging from introductory courses on ChatGPT and cybersecurity to graphic design and job networking. The expansion of Jackie’s Room is in the planning stages, aiming to provide even more resources and learning opportunities in areas including podcasting, digital conversion, video design, and more.

In April, we celebrated at The Library Foundation Gala where we raise critical funds to provide enhancements to our Library that our community relies on. Nearly 250 guests joined us at the Wellesley Country Club for an unforgettable evening and we raised over \$330,000, our largest amount ever.

As we move into 2025, I am optimistic about the continued growth and innovation at WFL. Our commitment to community engagement, inclusivity and technological advancement continue to guide and nurture our fundraising efforts. We are immensely grateful to you, our Foundation donors, for your unwavering support, which makes our support of these programs possible.

Warm regards,



Keith F. Higgins
President, The Wellesley Free Library Foundation

Thank you for being a vital part of our Library community. Together, we will continue to cultivate a love of learning and grow a welcoming space for all.

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Allies in Our Cause

We are blessed with Wellesley Residents so generous with their time and gifts. At The Library Foundation, our mission is to provide the extras that make our Library exceptional. We tap into our community’s generous donations, gifts large and small that add up to put these key improvements within reach. Each year, The Library Foundation grants an average of nearly \$250,000 to the Library for special projects and heavily used innovative resources and programs. Your generosity makes our mission possible, and we are grateful for your support.

Together, we take what you love and make it better.





Enhancing Technology Resources For Our Community

In an era where technology is ever evolving, some members of our community can be at risk of falling behind. Our investment into technology enhancements and educational programming has been crucial. Our technology programming flourished with more than 130 in-person and digital events, ranging from introductory courses on ChatGPT and cybersecurity



to graphic design and job networking. The expansion of Jackie's Room is in the planning stages, aiming to provide even more resources and learning opportunities in areas including podcasting, digital conversion, video design, and more.

130
in-person and online
technology-focused events

In 2024
Jackie's Room was stocked
with Windows 10 computers,
MacBook Pros laptops, iPads,
adapters, styluses, cords, and
various digitizing hardware

ESOL

10

ESOL teachers offered
15 classes a week both
in-person and online

2,128

total hours were
provided by teachers of
classes including prep
and class time



Preparing Residents for Success

Our English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) made great advances in further facilitating connections for adult learners from diverse backgrounds. Under the guidance of a dedicated Coordinator, we welcomed participants from

15 countries, including refugees from Ukraine, highlighting our commitment to serve the global community.

The program's structure allows students to progress through tailored classes, culminating in volunteer opportunities that encourage them to give back in turn to newcomers to the program. The support from our tutors, who provided over 1,340 hours of personalized instruction, remains invaluable. We are excited to introduce an American History class this fall, further enhancing our curriculum for those building their knowledge of their new home.





Nurturing a Love For Reading

This year, we continued to invest in outreach programs designed to engage all segments of our community. We saw remarkable success in our summer reading program, “Read, Renew, Repeat,” with 378 children participating—nearly a hundred more than last year. This surge in engagement, supported by our Foundation’s funding for registration software and grand prizes like LEGO kits, underscores our growing connection with our young patrons.

We’ve also created an increasingly welcoming environment for children of all neurotypes and abilities. This year, our partnerships with the Federation for Children with Special Needs and iCanFly introduced a sensory-friendly environment and dedicated playtime for children to explore and interact while developing gross and fine motor skills. These collaborations bring playtime to life in a critical new way for these parents and children, and foster inclusivity and exploration in our library space.

The inclusion extended beyond our walls with books from the 2024 summer reading list given to the Barton Road community, and for every infant born at Newton Wellesley Hospital in the form of “Born to Read” gift bags of board books, library card applications, and other literary resources.



OUTREACH

378
participants in “Read,
Renew, Repeat” summer
reading program

100
Born to Read bags were
distributed to Newton
Wellesley hospital in
April of 2024



Branches

Our branch libraries continue to enrich the community, with a commitment to sustainability reflected in the Heroes Garden at the Fells Branch. Funded by a generous donor, this garden not only honors our first responders but also serves as an outdoor learning and reading space for children. The garden is also a part of the pollination corridor, supporting Wellesley's green and conservation initiatives, and its design encourages creativity and a connection with nature, further embodying our library's mission to help patrons connect meaningfully with the environment.



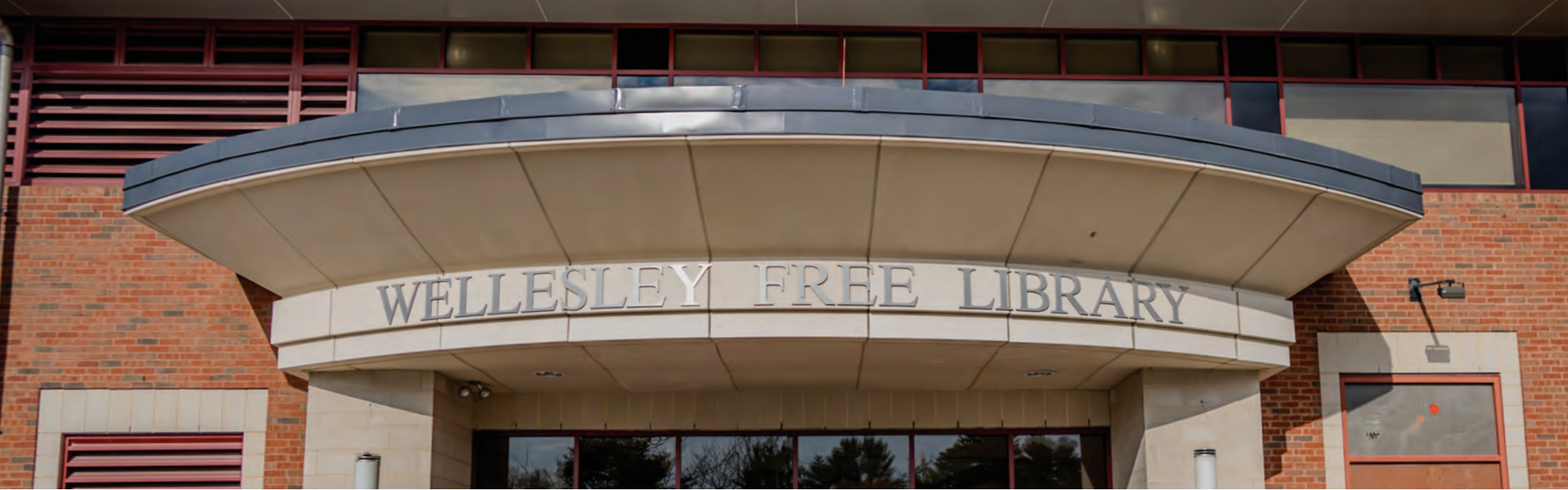
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Gala

In April, we raised over \$330,000 to help provide the extras that make our Library exceptional. We are so grateful for your contributions, which allow us to fund heavily used cutting-edge resources and enhancements at the Library, such as easy-access digital collections, technology and outreach. We were honored to have Wellesley High School graduate and bestselling author Richard Preston as our Featured Guest. Richard shared inspiring stories of climbing the giant trees of the US Pacific Northwest and the importance of the Wellesley Free Library in his childhood. Richard was introduced by his Wellesley High School English teacher, the beloved Jeannie Goddard, and then engaged in a lively fireside chat with WBZ-TV anchor Lisa Hughes.



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Help Strengthen
Our Community**

When you donate to the Wellesley Free Library Foundation, you make a big impact. So many individuals, families, and children in our community rely on your generous support. With your help, The Library Foundation can fulfill our mission of enriching your library experience creating a dynamic space where learning and exploration thrive. Your charitable gift will create positive change in our community, and we thank you for your support.

For questions contact:
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Take what you love
and make it better.

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